

TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY

BULLETIN

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CASE STUDY IN FOLK-SONG MAKING

by

Harold Benjamin

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We unrolled blankets at the edge of the strawstack, pulled off boots, loosened belts, and took out makings. Then we looked inquiringly at the music lover. He rose to his feet without delay, went to the bed wagon, and returned with Asher's guitar.

"Here," he said respectfully, shoving the instrument into the camp singer's hands. "How's about givin' us that one that's got old Tommy in it?"

Asher made modest noises, his worn countenance showing by the lantern light a seriousness of purpose in every line. We all knew that no song-maker in Central Oregon held his art at higher value than did this old ranch-hand, and none had a more genuine humility in its practice. We waited, relaxed, for the concert.

"This is one Asher made up his own self—all of it," explained the music lover.

"Aw, no," the poet said embarrassedly. "I never made up the tune. You all heerd that tune before. Chesley Olson had it for his song about the Siskiyou miners, and I heerd it before that even—I think—maybe."

"Well, anyway, you made up all the words," insisted the enthusiast.

"No, you can't say just exactly that neither," the ballad-maker continued judicially. I only kinda figured out what happened to Orman and his partner, fella name o' McBee, in a song-like; when they got busted down in Cow Canyon and them two gals they knowed in Shaniko heerd from the star-route carrier, citizen named Goodykoontz, where the boys was with their teams and wagons. Cecil and Rose, that's what the gals was named, they done filled their saddle pockets with nourishment, mostly liquor, and lit out to rescue the boys. And did they have a time! They camped out there for three days and my, my! It was a sin the way they carried on. I got a chanst of details, and I ain't sayin' who I got it from, but of course I didn't put all that in the song. The gals' folks live around Hood River yet, and they was and they are, far as I know, respectable people."

He tested the G chord and tightened the high E. "It kinda starts out like The Siskiyou Miners," he admitted apologetically.

"It's a hell of a lot better song than The Siskiyou Miners," stoutly interposed the music lover.

The bard shook his head deprecatingly, cleared his throat, started a rolling accompaniment, and began to sing in a clear, soft tenor, with confident dignity.

"I'll tell all you skimmers
From John Day to Bend
That the road south o' Shaniko
Ain't got no end;
It's rut-holes and boulders,
It's alkali dust,
But the jerkliners gotta make
Maupin or bust."

"I had this start some different at first," said Asher, "but Bill Brown's hoss wrangler, a kid named Stevie—you seen him probably down at the John Day depot two Sundays back—well, he fixed this first verse up. When I heerd him singin' it last fall over at Wapinitia, I liked the way he had it better'n mine, and now I don't rightly know how much o' this start is what I made up in the first place and how much is what Stevie made up when he couldn't just remember how I started it. Well, anyway this next part is just about the way I sung it right after I heerd from Orman and another party what happened."

"They rolled out Pete Orman
A quarter past three
He never had time
To get over the spree
That he'd started at noon
Only two days before;
When the call-boy come 'round,
Old Pete was right sore."

"Now what in the hell
Are they fixin' for me?
He wanted to know,
'Get out, let me be;
Last night my poor side-kick
Was throwed in the can,
Today we ride jerk-line
For no God-damn' man!'"

"Right here," Asher commented, "is where Stevie over at Bill Brown's says, 'For no mortal man,' and that's a more polite and a hell of a lot more educated way to say it, but Gawd Almighty, whoever heard old Orman talk knows well enough he never said no mortal man in all his life. He said no God-damn' man, and you and I know and that Stevie kid knows and every other God-damn' jasper between here and the Modoc lava beds knows that's what he said. He talked that way when he was sober and he talked even more that way when he was drunk. He was drunk when the call-boy roused him out and he had been drunk for thirty-four hours, like the song says, and his partner, that Lee McBee, was in jail all right enough for playin' around with a .44-40 the night before tryin' to scare a drummer from Seattle. Well, there was this call come through from Portland to get two freight outfits, three wagons and a twelve-horse team each, to haul a lot of machinery, mostly wheels of one kind or another, down to Bend. I never knowed what the wheels was for. I don't know that Orman ever knowed,

and the other party I talked to sure didn't know nothin' about that part of the picnic.

"They rolled out Pete Orman
And bailed out McBee,
They set a stiff price
With oats and grub free;
The boys had to take it,
The contract was made,
They watered, fed, harnessed,
And then hit the grade."

"The sun was just risin',
The weather was fine,
They figured clear sailin'
To the Cow Canyon line;
But while they was startin'
Up Shaniko Hill,
Orm tickled Old Tommy
With a porcupine quill."

You know my top saddle-hoss, that there bay gelding out in the rope corral right now?"

We all nodded solemnly. We knew this cue and we were not bored by the many times we had responded to it. We would have felt cheated if Asher had not stopped to make this inquiry.

"Yes sir, sure do," said the music lover with his customary eagerness.

"This here Tommy in the song, he was the off-wheel hoss in Orman's team. He was a stallion and a mighty skookum hoss, but he was mean and he was lazy. If Orman, riding' the near-wheeler, raised a quirt to Old Tommy, that animal never shied off none. He just stood up on his hind legs and did his damndest to shake hands with afeller, as the sayin' is, and he wasn't tryin' to make friends with him neither. So Orman, he took and drilled a little hole in the toe-sole of his off boot, and he put a porcupine quill in there and tamped it down with bees-wax, and when that stallion started to doggin' it on a pull, why Orman just reached out easy and tapped that porcupine quill into his belly. Old Tommy never did seem to make the connection between Orman and that jab in his belly. If he had of, he probably would of started shakin' hands again because he sure as hell wasn't afraid of Orman nor no other damn' man. I reckon he figured that pain come from some kind of animal or snake bite or something like that under him and so he better get the hell out of there."

"But just as they started
Up Shaniko Hill
Orm tickled Old Tommy
With the porcupine quill."

"What I forgot to tell you when I started was you know that saddle-hoss of mine, that bay gelding with the white stockin' on his near foreleg?"

We all nodded earnestly again, and the music lover added, "Yes sir, sure do, and a good hoss."

"Well, that hoss of mine, right out there in that rope corral," Asher lowered his voice impressively, "this Old Tommy, Orman's off-wheeler, was my own saddle-hoss's own daddy."

"Put in the oats
And shovel in the hay,
"We're goin' to make it through
If we can find a way;
"We ain't quite as fast
As the Oregon Trunk,
But we'll pull 'em into Bend
If we are both drunk."

I think that was a folk song Asher was singing. Occasionally I forget some of those stanzas myself, and when I do I go right ahead and make up my own. I have as much right to get my hand into that ballad as that Stevie kid did. Of course Old Tommy had more to do with it than any singer, in a way.

If Asher was here, he wouldn't care who sang the song which way. Everybody's got a right to sing a song the way he wants to, Asher would say.

BACK ISSUES OF THE T.F.S. BULLETIN WANTED

It should be gratifying to the members of our Society to know that a number of institutional libraries that have not heretofore regularly subscribed to the Bulletin are now attempting to obtain its complete files. They are able to purchase most of the back issues from the stock held in the office of the Editor, but the supply of certain numbers is exhausted. The Editor of the Bulletin has promised the libraries to do what he can to locate copies of issues not held in stock.

The numbers of the Bulletin particularly needed at present are:

Volume I, all numbers	Volume VI, No. 3
Volume II, all numbers	Volume VIII, No. 4
Volume IV, all numbers	

If members who have copies of these issues are willing to sell them, the Editor will be glad to pass on such information to the interested libraries.

Readers may recall that a similar notice was printed in the March, 1953, Bulletin. It elicited no response. That fact may be looked on as flattering evidence that members like to keep their files of the Bulletin. It seems likely, however, that somewhere, in an attic or basement, are copies of the Bulletin that could be put to better use in a college or city library.

MURDERERS AND CUT-THROATS IN SONG

by

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Next to love, I suppose the most popular theme in song or story, of all time, is murder—in one form or another. Considering that so many of the old English and Scottish ballads included both love and murder, it is no wonder they were sure-fire hits of the time, and still are. One might go so far as to say that ballads and folksongs including fatal bloodshed (certainly if one includes deaths by broken hearts) probably outnumber those of strictly non-violence love—about ten to one. And, I suppose about the same ratio exists between love-and-murder songs and completely non-love-murder.

As has been pointed out, and as everyone knew anyhow, love and murder (or suicide, or even death from a broken heart, in the old days) sometimes overlap. For example, in "Warren and Fuller," love evidently spurs on the murder. Here, Fuller, having "courted the fairest of the fair, intending for to make her his wife,"--leaves town, for some reason or other. While he is gone, the girl changes her mind in favor of Warren. Fuller, getting wind of the matter, comes back, threatens to kill Warren unless he absconds (sans girl), and when Warren refuses, does just that:

Then Fuller, through a passion of love and anger bound,
Which caused many for to cry,
And, with the fatal shot, he killed Warren on the spot,
And smiling, said, "I'm ready now to die."
(My mother's Missouri version.)*

These songs of lover-murderers may be told in different ways, of course. "The Knoxville Girl" ("The Oxford Girl" or "The Wexford Girl") more or less reports a blow-by-blow account of the murder.

As we went out a-walking
Upon a Sunday morn,
I drew a stick from off the hedge
And knocked the fair girl down.

I took her by her yellow curls,
I slung her round and round;
I threw her in the river
That runs through Knoxville Town.

(Mrs. W. H. Keener's West Virginia version.)

*Note: When I speak of someone's version, I do not mean that any of these people are collectors, of course. I merely wish to state the name of the contributor who has written off the text, or made a recording for me of both tune and text of the song mentioned, and the state from which it comes.

Still others represent a murderer's reminiscence of his past offences, and sometimes a whole life history, before he is hanged—a kind of gallows confession, as in the "Confession of McAfee." McAfee says of his murdered wife,

She was as good and kind to me
As any woman needs to be,
And would be living still no doubt,
Had I not met Miss Hetty Rhout.
(My mother's Missouri version.)

However, the fascinating Hetty was evidently too much for him. Shortly before the hanging he admits that he poisoned his wife and then strangled her --for love of Hetty. Nevertheless, his optimism is as enduring as the mountains. His last words are, more or less, "See you all in Heaven."

Other gallows-confession songs are "Charles Guiteau," the repentant murderer of James A. Garfield, and "Sam Hall," who curses everybody.

Oh, my name it is Sam Hall,
It is Sam Hall, it is Sam Hall;
Oh, my name it is Sam Hall,
It is Sam Hall, it is Sam Hall;
Oh, my name it is Sam Hall,
And I hate you, one and all,
And I hate you one and all!
God damn your eyes!
(Professor Edwin Ford Piper's Iowa version.)

"Frankie and Johnnie" is a typical example of murder through jealousy. "The Jealous Lover" is, evidently, an example of insane jealousy, something like the Othello-Desdemona case—only without reason, as far as I can see.

Down on her knees before him
She pleaded for her life,
But deep into her bosom
He plunged the fatal knife.

(The above version was contributed by Walter H. Keener, of West Virginia, but barring the fact that usually the expression "snow-white bosom" is used, it is almost identical with every other version.)

"Pretty Polly," an old seduction-murder song of English origin, bears some resemblance to the story of An American Tragedy, in that the young man kills the girl to keep from marrying her. In most versions he takes the girl walking one night, supposedly to plan their marriage, and when they come to an open grave, confesses that he "was digging her grave the best part of last night," after which he kills her, throws her in the grave, and leaves. This song is an Americanized version of a long, old British ballad called "The Gosport Tragedy" or "The Cruel Ship's Carpenter," in which the man goes back to sea, and, when the girl and her baby appear as ghosts, dies, a raving maniac. In my West Virginia version contributed by Mr. Everett Smith, all this happens and more. The girl, with the infant in her arms, appears and:

With screams of loud screeches cried out in loud cries,
Till flashes of lightning fell down from the skies,
Set the whole ship's crew in a tremble of fear,
But none saw the ghost, but a voice they did hear.

The young man sees her, however, pleads with the captain to save him, and goes below deck. However, the girl warns the captain that unless he gives up the man-murderer to her, she will cause a terrible storm, so that he (the captain) thinks better of it and goes for the youth. Immediately she casts her eyes "so grim" upon him (the youth), and leads him off by the scruff of the coat into her little boat. And then,

She sank her boat in a flame of fire,
Which caused the seamen to admire.

Sometimes, murder is more or less exonerated, as in the case of the two murders committed in self defense by the girl in "The Banks of the Sweet Dundee," another old English folksong. Here the girl loves her uncle's plow boy, but is about to be compelled to marry a rich squire. Her parents are both dead, and she and "ten thousand pounds in gold" are left in charge of her uncle. When she refuses to marry the squire, with the words,

"A fig for all your squires,
Your lords, your dukes likewise;
My William's eyes just look to me
Like diamonds in the skies,"

(Mrs. Bertha Tichenor's Fairmont, West Virginia version. Also very similar to Mrs. Stella McClure's West Virginia version and Mr. Kunkle's Illinois version

her uncle says,

"Go on, unruly female,
You shall not happy be,
For I'm going to banish William
From the banks of the Sweet Dundee."

However, he has the "press gang" kill him instead, and while she is out walking one morning, "lamenting for her love," the wealthy squire comes up, and tries to make love to her by force. But the maiden believes in preparedness. She has two pistols and a sword hidden underneath her "morning gown" (or "mourning gown") and seems to be mighty apt at using them.

She shot, she fired, and killed the squire
On the banks of the Sweet Dundee.

But it seems her uncle just won't give up. Hearing the noise of shooting, he puts in an appearance and starts to take her life for killing the squire. Evidently, however, he fails to realize how handy this girl, Mary, is with a gun. She promptly, after warning him to stand off,

The trigger drew, and her uncle slew
On the banks of the Sweet Dundee.

By this time, the uncle is either so impressed by her gunmanship, or so repentant that he has underestimated her determination to stand up for women's rights that he leaves Mary all his money as well as her own. Or perhaps he just simply doesn't have anybody else to leave it to. Anyhow, he sends for a lawyer as well as a doctor, and wills her everything with his last gasp.

Many ballads and songs of English origin name their locality as "in London" or "in London Town." Perhaps one of the least known of these is "The Box on Her Head." My father used to sing this when I was a child, and also my two aunts who lived with us. W. Roy MacKenzie includes this in his collection, Ballads and Sea Songs of Nova Scotia, and no other ballad collection does, as far as I have seen able to learn. There have been one or two discussions of "The Undaunted Female" in the Journal of American Folklore, Notes and Queries, but unless I'm badly mistaken, these were in the early issues of the Journal—perhaps fifty years ago, or more. In other words, it is possible that my two brothers and myself are the only three living people in the United States who know it—and I am not absolutely sure that my brothers do. It is not a Child ballad—that is, it is not one of the three hundred and five ballads included in Professor Francis James Child's mammoth collection of English and Scottish Popular Ballads (1882-1898), although the theme is similar to that of Child ballad No. 203, "The Crafty Farmer," namely the robber outwitted. However, in this case, the one who does the outwitting is a girl, and what a girl! According to my father's version, the song starts out something like this:

For seven long years a servant girl
In London Town did dwell;

At the end of seven years, her master pays her in gold and silver, evidently, which she puts in a box. She nails the box up, puts it on her head, and starts home. The first young man she encounters is a robber (although she doesn't know this at first), who warns her if she does not "deliver up her money, without any strife," he'll end her life, then and there. At first, she doesn't know what to do.

The tears from her eyes
Like a fountain they did flow;
"Oh, where shall I wander?
Oh where shall I go?"

Chorus: For I do, I do, I do, I do, I day.

But the girl is a practical soul and is determined to save her cash. So, before the robber can lift a hand to carry out his threats, she picks up her box, flattens him with one blow, and, replacing the box on her head, walks on. The next man she meets is a "strong and noble one." He inquires into the sounds of violence he has just heard, so she leads him back to where the dead robber lies. They search his pockets and find a pistol, some ball, and a whistle, "the robbers for 'to call." The young man blows the whistle and four more robbers come "trooping o'er the hill." Undaunted by robbers or numbers now, the two make short work of them.

He shot the first one,
Came bounding o'er so free,
And this pretty, fair miss,
She killed the other three.

Chorus: Fol I do, I do, I do, I do, I day.

No article of outlaws and killers would be complete without some mention of Jesse James, and in West Virginia, at least, John Hardy. John Hardy was a fabulously good steel-driver, who, according to John Harrington Cox, won bets for his employer, was handsome, "black as a kettle," strong, and very popular with the Negro ladies—but he murdered a man over a twenty-five cent card game, and was hanged. My West Virginia version, contributed by Argel Jordon, a former student, ends with a somewhat religious slant—in typical gallows-song fashion:

"I've been to the East and I've been to the West,
I've been this whole world round;
I've been to the river and I've been baptized,
And now I am on my hanging ground,
And now I am on my hanging ground."

Almost all typical ballads and folksongs, whether American or English in origin, are based upon some actual event or character. Of all thieves, murderers, or outlaws in general, probably none is so well known as Jesse James. He is our American Robin Hood. Personally, I strongly suspect he deliberately imitated him.

I have always marveled at Jesse's philosophy of life and sense of values. As far as I can see, with all his super-guerilla qualities, he was as consistently inconsistent as Cleopatra. A few minor killings—some dozen or fifty, say—didn't seem to bother him much, one way or the other, but a swear word, spoken in the presence of a lady, was unpardonable. The robbing of a bank or train, including the United States mail, with accompanying killings, meant about as much to him as pulling so many weeds—but the foreclosing of a mortgage on a poor widow was sheer brutality. I don't know that he read the Bible just before each robbery or killing, but he did read it every day, I understand, though he evidently skipped or ignored the Ten Commandments, or at least the two on killing and stealing.

Anybody knows there was some good in this capable and kind-hearted (to widows and orphans and poor folks generally, anyway) but misguided man. And whether there was or wasn't, I think most of us resent the treachery of Robert Ford as expressed in the chorus common to most versions:

Jesse left a wife to mourn all her life;
The children they were brave;
But the dirty little coward, that shot Mr. Howard,
Has laid Jesse James in his grave.

(My own Iowa version, contributed by Elwyn Brown, has "The children, they will pray.")

The two lines,

For he ate of Jesse's bread, and he slept in Jesse's bed,
Then he laid poor Jesse in his grave,

common to most versions, especially bring out the general resentment felt against Ford. I strongly suspect most of us feel some sympathy toward Jesse

James and always will. However, as Vance Randolph says of the attitude of the Ozark folks toward outlaws in general, we might have had far less tolerance if we had lived where and when it might have been our throats and purses he was cutting. The same thing, no doubt, applies to the legendary Robin Hood, who according to a fragmentary West Virginia version, "robbed the rich and gave to the poor." (Just like Jesse James for the world!)

Much as I abominate actual murder and violence of all kinds, I love ballads and folksongs of these same events, whether they are of our American outlaws, or English and Scottish law-breakers. Evidently a great number of people feel as I do about such ballads. Of all American ballads, that is, ballads not of European origin, "Jesse James" is certainly one of the most popular. Also, in Vance Randolph's Ozark Folksongs, Volume II, 156 of the 435 pages are devoted to his section entitled "Songs About Murderers and Outlaws." And, in the 1882-1898 edition of the collection of Professor Francis James Child's English and Scottish Popular Ballads, thirty-eight are Robin Hood ballads, and I would say, off-hand, that about fifty per cent of the others have to do with murder, suicide, thieving, rape--or some form of law-breaking. In other words, there is "never a dull moment!"

SOME EAST TENNESSEE FIGURATIVE EXAGGERATIONS

by

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Since the publication of my earlier collection of folk similes and other figures of speech,¹ a number of folklorists have added reports on the colorful expressions current in Tennessee and Kentucky. For their general comments as well as the items they list, the interested reader is referred to the following articles, which are arranged in order of their appearance in print:

Herbert Halpert, "A Pattern of Proverbial Exaggeration from West Kentucky," Midwest Folklore, I (April 1951), 41-47.

Herbert Halpert, "Proverbial Comparisons from West Tennessee," T.F.S. Bulletin, XVII (September 1951), 49-61.

Martha Dell Sanders, "Proverbial Exaggerations from Paducah, Kentucky," Midwest Folklore, I (Fall 1951), 191-192.

1. E. G. Rogers, "Figurative Language the Folkway," T.F.S. Bulletin, XVI (December 1950), 71-75.

Herbert Halpert, "More Proverbial Comparisons from West Tennessee," T.F.S. Bulletin, XVIII (March 1952), 15-21.

Leonard Roberts, "Additional Exaggerations from East Kentucky," Midwest Folklore, II (Fall 1952), 163-166.

In the second of the articles listed above, Professor Halpert set up a convenient outline for organizing collections of figurative expressions. Abandoning my own earlier method of "classifying broadly the nature of the areas to which...figurative reference is made," I now offer a second collection of folk exaggerations arranged in Professor Halpert's structurally distinguished categories. I have, however, broken down his Category II, "Other Exaggerations," and I suggest that the group of miscellaneous items included within it could bear still further analysis. Within each category, the list is arranged in alphabetical sequence. In Category I the words underlined are those on which the alphabetical order is based.²

Most of the expressions that make up the body of this article were compiled from reports offered by students attending Tennessee Wesleyan College at Athens, Tennessee. A few items from other sources have been added. The coverage actually goes beyond the limits of East Tennessee, for some expressions included were reported from Grundy County (a border county), Davidson and White Counties (Middle Tennessee), and Shelby County (West Tennessee). East Tennessee Counties represented are Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Granger, Hamilton, Knox, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, and Sullivan.

As a matter of fact, however, the exaggerations found in one county are generally known in the other counties sampled. I have personally heard many of them in Middle Tennessee. The one marked characteristic of East Tennessee figurative exaggerations appears to be the frequency in hilly or mountainous counties of references to the height of hills and remoteness from "civilization" that results from the topography.

A casual check on the list indicates that a number of these expressions are also known in Northern Georgia and Eastern Kentucky.

I. Exaggerations of the Form, "So Cold (That)"

1. The fish was so big that when I landed it the lake fell two feet.
2. Cow so bony you could hang a bucket on her hips.
3. So bow-legged that he couldn't head a pig in a ditch.
4. So cold that hell froze over.
5. So cold that he had to thaw his words out to know what he'd said.
6. He was so crooked that when he died they had to screw him into the ground.
7. Road so crooked you meet yourself coming back.
8. So crosseyed that tears ran down his back.
9. So deep in the mountains, they looked up the chimney to see if the cows were coming.
10. A knife so dull you could ride to mill on it.

2. Grateful acknowledgment is made to Mrs. Bessie C. Hopkins, Mississippi State College, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, for her assistance in organizing and alphabetizing the items here reported.

11. A knife so dull you couldn't cut s... with it.
12. So drunk he can't hit the floor with his hat.
13. So dumb he don't know beef (also "b") from bull's foot
14. So dumb that if his brains were put in a jay bird, the bird would fly backward.
15. So dumb that he don't know beans.
16. So efficient he turns his land on end and farms both sides.
17. So far back in the hills they have to order light from Sears-Roebuck.
18. So far back in the hills they can't hear the Grand Ole Opry till Tuesday night.
19. So far back in jail they had to shoot beans into his cell with a .22 rifle.
20. So far back in the mountains that they used hoot owls for roosters.
21. So far back in the sticks that his breath smells like cordwood.
22. He went so fast it took two to see him: one to say, "Here he comes," and the other, "There he goes."
23. So fat that when someone hugs her, they have to mark her off, so they will know when they have been all the way round.
24. So forgetful that he would lose his head if it were loose on his shoulders.
25. So frightened that he ran like a scared haint (ghost).
26. So good she was sprouting wings.
27. Hit so hard he was knocked into the middle of next week.
28. He pinches a penny so hard his piggy bank is full of copper dust.
29. Hit so hard his shirt ran up his back like a window shade.
30. It was raining so hard it was raining nigger babies.
31. Hit so hard you will get up in China.
32. Hit so hard you won't find yourselves before the middle of next year.
33. Kick him so high that the bats will build a nest in his a... before he hits the ground.
34. Kicked so high the buzzards would pick the meat off his bones before he hit the ground.
35. So high that you can climb a stepladder and shake hands with the man in the moon.
36. So hilly you can look out of your cellar door into your neighbor's attic.
37. He was so hungry he could eat a horse.
38. So lazy he got blisters on his hind end.
39. So lazy he would starve to death in a pie factory.
40. So large he hunted elephants with switches.
41. He felt so lean he could crawl under a cigarette paper.
42. Legs so long and skinny he wears a double-barreled shotgun for pants.
43. So low down if he sat down on the edge of a cigarette paper and hung his legs over the side, they would not touch the ground.
44. So mad he could bite a ten-penny nail in two.
45. Farm grew so many cats you could not stack them on the same farm.
46. So many rabbits you have to shoot them, so the dogs will have room to hunt.
47. So mean he ate rat meat and gun powder.
48. So mean he goes bear-hunting with a hickory switch.
49. Talks so much his tongue must be tied in the middle and loose at both ends.
50. A farm so poor that two red-headed women could not raise hell on it.

3. The Grand Ole Opry is regularly produced in Nashville on Saturday night.

51. Horse so poor his bones rattled.
52. Land so poor it won't sprout black-eyed peas.
53. Land so poor it won't sprout goobers.
54. Land so poor you could not raise an umbrella on it.
55. Eyes so red they looked like two cherries in a glass of buttermilk.
56. So skinny she disappears by turning sideways.
57. So slow the effort required a month of Sundays.
58. Felt so small he could walk under a snake with a stove-pipe hat without touching it.
59. So smart he could stand on his head and stack greased bee-bees.
60. Hill so steep that he planted his seed with a shotgun.
61. Farm so steep he plants his corn with a shotgun from the next ridge.
62. Coffee so strong it would float an iron wedge.
63. She was so sweet that honey would not melt in her mouth.
64. So tall he had to get up in sections.
65. Fog so thick you couldn't cut it with a knife.
66. People so thick you couldn't stir them with a stick.
67. So thin he looks like a thermometer when he drinks tomato juice.
68. So thin she could sit on a dime.
69. So thin she'd have to stand twice to make a shadow.
70. She's so thin you'd have to shake the sheets to find her.
71. So tight he would make the buffalo on a nickel holler.
72. So tight he would make the eagle on a half-dollar squall.
73. So tight you couldn't sink him with a ton of bricks.
74. So ugly she would make a rooster crow at midnight.

II. Other Exaggerations

A. Ironical contradiction of exaggerated type:

75. A good farm because sawbriars fenced it and crawfish plowed it.

B. Metaphors of the type, "It rained pitchforks and nigger babies."

76. It rained black cats. (Cf. also No. 30.)
77. It rained toadfrogs.

C. Miscellaneous

78. (An automobile) can turn on a dime and have nine cents left in change.
79. Cold enough to freeze the horns off a green monkey.
80. (A person) don't have sense enough to carry guts to a hungry bear.
81. His tongue got over his eye teeth, so he couldn't see what he was saying.
82. If your brains were dynamite and exploded, they wouldn't blow your nose.
83. She don't wear enough clothes to wad a gun.
84. You can see meanness sticking out all over her.

III. Comparisons in the Comparative Degree

85. He couldn't be trusted further than you could throw a bull by the tail.
86. Slower than molasses running uphill in winter.

IV. Comparisons Based on the Noun

87. His grin was like a mule eating briars.

V. Various Adjectival Comparisons Using "Like"

88. Sweating like a Negro at an election.

VI. Adverbial Comparisons Using "Like"

89. ...like a tallow-legged dog chasing an asbestos cat through hell.

VII. Adjectival Comparisons Using "As"

90. As out of place in a city as a horsefly at an automobile show.

THE INFLUENCES OF GEOGRAPHY ON NORTH AMERICAN FOLKLORE

by

Mildred Hatcher

Austin Peay State College

Much is being written and spoken today concerning the importance of collecting and teaching our rich heritage of folklore, as a means of interpreting our American way of life; but too little is being said concerning the fact that the backgrounds of folklore are the geographical factors which largely determined the mode of living and consequently produced, generally speaking, that folklore.

Indeed, the topography of the land--the hills, the rivers, the plains, the mountains, and the valleys; the fertility of the soil; the mineral resources; the climatic conditions; and many other aspects of geography are the molding influences upon the lives of the people of a given community. Their character, their occupations, their manners, their peculiarities of speech, their ideals, their superstitions, and their fears, all their patterns of living, grow out of the life made possible by the nature of the locality which they inhabit. In other words, geography provides the conditions under which people live, while their folklore reflects these conditions.

The distinctive thing about North American folklore, as Dr. Elizabeth Pilant once pointed out, is that it is primarily the story of a conquest over nature rather than over human beings. "Regardless of the reason why, it has been our good fortune to grow into a world power on this continent in an area largely unoccupied by other peoples in great numbers. That is, America became a great power without a long career as a ruthless conqueror. Consequently, our folk heroes are largely goodnatured work giants who conquered the forces of nature--forest, sod, rivers, deserts, mountains, and distances." She cited as examples "Paul Bunyan, John Henry, Pecos Bill, Febold Feboldson, Johnny

Appleseed, Davy Crockett, Old Stormalong, and Joe Margarac." Here she used the term "folk heroes" to avoid the controversy over "folklore heroes" in the strictest sense of the term. She added, "Anything which serves to teach mankind that his real foe is the physical forces of nature and not other folks is of inestimable value."

Folklore is a general term embracing all that relates to the cultural patterns of the relatively unlettered people, held together by common interests. It is a whole body of arts, traditions, literature, music, crafts, knowledge, and customs which have been traditionally preserved from one generation to the next. There are several broad categories of folk materials: the literary, which includes folk ballads and folk songs, folk legends, folk myths, and folk tales; the linguistic, that embodies folk sayings, dialect, and various other patterns of speech; the pseudo-scientific, which consists of bits of weather lore, homely wisdom, magic and witchcraft, and other forms of belief; and the social, which comprises games, festivals, music, dances, and customs. To these should be added the folk arts and crafts, all of which are governed largely, by the natural resources and other geographical conditions.

In all the various classes of folk materials, regional differences are to be noted in the different parts of the United States, for each division of folklore has emerged from groups of American people who had common traditions, from their needs, emotions, manners and customs, hopes and fears, all of which are closely associated with their way of living and with their means of earning a livelihood in their own isolated community. We have the cowboys of the plains in the West and the Southwest; the seekers of gold in California, those who were called the "Forty-Niners"; the mountaineers, especially of Kentucky, Tennessee, and North Carolina; the loggers of the lumber camps in Maine and Minnesota, the latter being Paul Bunyan's playground; the Negroes on the plantations in the South; the boatmen who plied up and down our rivers and sea coasts; the transients--tramps and hoboes who roamed over the country; the border patrols along the boundary between Mexico and the United States; the men of the turpentine camps in the South; and the Indians of the Southwest, all of whom struggled against the different forces of nature and found a need for their folklore--their chants, their songs, their dances, their yarns, and their stories, or "tall tales," as a means for escaping the effects of loneliness and of drudgery.

Although space will not permit a discussion of each of these, let us consider how geography specifically influenced the origins of a few of them.

The cowboy ballads, for example, emerged from the economic phases of our western development. After the War between the States, the plains west of the Mississippi became vast grazing lands for cattle, and the need for cowboys arose. As a means of entertainment, they voiced in songs their experiences. Many variations developed as the ballads spread orally to the different camps, year after year.

Two of these "Whoopee Ti Yo, Get Along, Little Dogies" and "The Old Chisholm Trail" are said to have been created for the purpose of preventing cattle stampedes, while the boys were riding their herd at night. The Chisholm Trail was the long cattle trail stretching between Texas and Montana. The cattle were raised in the former state, but in the spring they were driven to Montana to be grazed for the market.

But soon other geographical influences began to affect the cowboys and their songs. By 1890 many railroads had been extended into the plains, farmers had converted vast areas into enclosed wheat fields, and towns had sprung up all over the prairie. The literature of the cowboys began to be forgotten; but collectors visited the campfires and recorded the native songs, thereby preserving a folk literature which gives an insight into an important phase of our western development.

Also the great army of lumberjacks who worked in the forests that reached from Maine to Washington added much to our heritage of folklore by "spinning yarns" and developing the "tall tale." To while away time, they, too, sat around their camp fires in the evenings, sang songs, and told of heroic deeds. Thus, they created superhuman characters like Paul Bunyan, who could perform miraculous deeds with no effort.

In like manner, fabulous stories grew up among the Southern Appalachian loggers. We have, for example, Tony Beavers, who tells of how his team of oxen actually turned the wheels of time to please a little sick boy.

The southern plantations, too, have furnished an abundance of folklore. Favorable geographical factors led to the growing of cotton and to the importation of vast numbers of slaves. These Negroes brought with them from Africa many myths and legends. As they were spread orally over the plantations, numerous additions and alterations were made from the Negroes' imagination and from their new experiences. The animal stories were recorded by Joel Chandler Harris, and volumes of Negro songs and spirituals have been preserved by the various collectors.

Also, the folklore of the Indians reflects the geographical conditions which have influenced their thinking, their customs, and their modes of living. The tribes in the Southwest, a semi-arid region, for instance, are vitally dependent on rain. Consequently, a feature of their primitive religion is their ceremony to the Rain God. The "Song of the Rain Chant," for example, pictures the Rain Youth as he comes down from a distant mountain, passes through corn fields, and becomes so covered with pollen that he himself is hidden from view. The Rain-Mountain is a distant mountain west of Zuni, and it is the home of the Rain Youth. Other tribes likewise personify elements of nature, such as wind, rain, moon and harvest; but many variations are found in the chants, songs and dances of the different groups, because of the differences in their surroundings and in their needs. Similarly, there are as many kinds of Indian pottery as there are tribes, as their natural resources vary.

Then, too, New England, the Deep South, the Far West, and other sections of our country have peculiar folk expressions that reflect the history, the population, and the physical environment of the specific region.

Thus, a knowledge of American geography is necessary for an understanding and full appreciation of our folklore, for geography and folklore are inseparable.

NEWS AND REVIEWS

READERS OF THE BULLETIN will be delighted to know that an enlarged edition of Mrs. Flora L. McDowell's Folk Dances of Tennessee is being brought out this spring by the Cooperative Recreation Service, Delaware, Ohio. Orders will be taken by the publisher. The price of the book is \$1.50.

THE FEBRUARY ISSUE of the Tennessee Teacher carried a three-page picture-and-story article on Miss Fanny Kiser's use of folk music and folk instruments in her work with fourth grade children at the Du' Pont Elementary School in Old Hickory. Reference was made to the performance of Miss Kiser's children at the meeting of the Tennessee Folklore Society last fall. Both pictures and text were the work of Miss Jane Cox, Editor of the Tennessee Teacher.

ON APRIL 17, at the Henry Clay Hotel in Louisville, the Kentucky Folklore Society held its annual spring meeting. The Society was privileged to hear Professor Tristram P. Coffin discuss "The Story of the Carol." The new president of the Kentucky Folklore Society is Professor Herbert Halpert of Murray State College, who has been a frequent contributor to the T.F.S. Bulletin.

A JOINT MEETING of the American Folklore Society, the Kentucky Folklore Society, and the Mississippi Valley Historical Association was held at the Hotel Lafayette in Lexington, Kentucky, on May 8-9. Among other speakers on the two-day program was Professor George Grise, a member of T.F.S., who told of his experience in "Introducing Students to Poetry Through Folksongs."

A NEW MAGAZINE titled American Folk Music is being launched this spring as the official publication of the "Folk Music Society of America" and "American Folk Artists." It is planned as a monthly publication to be "devoted to news and advancement of folk music and artists." The editorial and business office address is 25th Floor, 220 West 42nd Street, New York 36, N. Y.

Mr. Kenneth S. Goldstein, Managing Editor of the new periodical, writes that he will welcome from members of our Society not only subscriptions but information and materials relating to folk music.

SINGIN' BILLY, an opera based on folk themes (dialogue and lyrics by Donald Davidson; score by Charles F. Bryan) was given its third performance at the Vanderbilt University Theatre on April 25, 1952. Exactly a year later, April 25, 1953, a tape recording of that performance was played back at the Vanderbilt Theatre to an invited audience of about one hundred students and townspeople of Nashville. The play-back was arranged by Professor Donald Davidson.

THE WINTER ISSUE of West Virginia Folklore prints texts of Child ballads and other folk songs collected within the state. It also records a number of folktales and superstitions that are traditional in West Virginia. The editor of the journal, which is the official publication of the West Virginia Folklore Society, is Dr. Ruth Ann Musick, who is one of the contributors to this issue of our Bulletin.

THE LEADING ARTICLE in the winter issue of Midwest Folklore is "Death Beliefs from Indiana," by Violetta Maloney Halpert. Mrs. Halpert is the wife of Herbert Halpert, who is well known to readers of the T.F.S. Bulletin.

The same journal carries an account of "Omens and Tokens of West Virginia" by Ruth Ann Musick. Other articles in the winter issue are Svend Frederiksen's discussion of "Aspects of European Influence in West Greenland," Ivan H. Walton's report on "Folk Singing on Beaver Island," Richard M. Dorson's "Negro Witch Stories on Tape," and a report on "Folk Life Research in Norway," written by Brita Gjerdalen Skre.

PROMENADE, A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE prints in Volume VIII, Issue 8, the text and melody of a version of "Fair Ellender" collected from Texas. Also of interest in this issue are the detailed directions for an "improvised folk dance" whose originator, Bob Krebs, calls it "Clara's Contra."

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS has issued three more items in its Anthropological Records series. They are: "The Coville Rock Shelter, Inyo County, California," by Clement W. Meighan; "Atsugewi Ethnography," by Thomas R. Garth; and "California Indian Linguistic Records: The Mission Indian Vocabularies of Alphonse Pinart," edited by R. F. Heizer.

TLALOCAN, A Journal of Source Materials on the Native Cultures of Mexico, contains in its most recent number (Volume III, No. 3) a Zoque text and English translation of a Mexican folktale called "The Mason." The materials were prepared by W. Roy Harrison. Of particular interest also, in the same issue, is the reproduction of a 19th century Indian text detailing a "Danza de la Gran Conquista," with an English translation by Byron McAfee.

AS AN EXCHANGE, the Österreichische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde is now received in the office of the Editor of the T.F.S. Bulletin. The publication is prepared in Vienna under the editorship of Dr. Anton Dörner and Dr. Leopold Schmidt.

DURING THE SUMMER QUARTER AT GEORGE PEABODY COLLEGE FOR TEACHERS, English 443A, American Folklore, will be offered by John E. Brewton, Head of the English Department. Folk literature in the United States will be surveyed and the significance of folklore as an aid to understanding the racial and cultural heritage of American life will be stressed. Topics to be discussed include: What Is Folklore? Folklore in American Life; Myths, Legends, and Traditions; Folktales and Anecdotes; Folk Heroes; Songs, Ballads, and Rhymes; Folk Speech and Folk Sayings; Beliefs in the Supernatural; Folk Wisdom; Customs, Rituals, and Ceremonies; Folk Dramas, Festivals, and Holidays; Folk Music, Dances, and Games; Arts and Crafts; How and What to Collect; and The Utilization of Folklore.

WINIFRED SMITH AND GEORGE C. GRISE represented the State of Tennessee at the National Folk Festival in St. Louis on April 8 and 9. Miss Smith sang a group of Ohio River songs to a very appreciative audience. Dr. Grise extended his activities to include radio broadcasts of Tennessee songs and stories. One of his song-story sequences told the tale of the Bell Witch. Dr. Grise writes, "I found no one out there had ever heard of our famous witch. I consider myself a missionary to the heathen."

PROFESSOR E. G. ROGERS WRITES, "There has just come into my hands a study of Cherokees and Pioneers by William A. McCall, Professor of Education at Columbia University, and a native mountaineer. It is an account of a most critical and complex period of swiftly moving events in Southern history, simply and dramatically told. It is the most succinct account of the tragic story of the Cherokees which I have seen. Copies may be procured from Standard Souvenirs, 5005 Chapman Highway, Knoxville, Tennessee, at \$1.00 each."

Vance Randolph and George P. Wilson, Down in the Holler, Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953. \$5.00.

This book is the result of the study over a period of years of the Ozark speech in its many phases—pronunciation, grammar, early English survivals, dialect in fiction, taboos and euphemisms, unusual words and their meanings, sayings and wisecracks. It concludes with a list of words with keys to spelling and pronunciation, and an explanation of usage.

The people "down in the holler" may have been "deliberately unprogressive" in the face of modern industrialism, as the authors point out, but even some of the sophisticated and educated today pride themselves in quaint expressions and in odd or unorthodox constructions of grammar in keeping with their tradition. More quaintly too, to the outsider, some of their sayings couched in words whose meanings are well-known are simply baffling because of the idioms employed.

The authors point out that a proper understanding of the correct spelling and pronunciation of Ozark dialectic words is the main difficulty and point of confusion faced by many who attempt such studies. The comprehensive, intimate knowledge and understanding of the authors in the present study, combined with a clear and simple style of presentation make this volume of equal interest to the lay reader, the philologist, the folklorist, and the historian. The narrative style likewise interprets a background of customs, traditions, and philosophy of these hill people of the Ozarks. The book is now humorous, now serious, now excitingly informative, but never dry.

Those familiar with the other books by Vance Randolph recently reviewed in the Bulletin (We Always Lie to Strangers, reviewed by E. G. Rogers, XVII, 3:70, and Who Blowed up the Church House? And Other Ozark Tales, reviewed by W. J. Griffin, XVIII, 4:126) will have a special interest in the present study so basically interpretative of each of the other volumes.

--E. G. Rogers

Richard M. Dorson, Bloodstoppers and Bearwalkers, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952. \$5.00.

Bloodstoppers and Bearwalkers by Richard M. Dorson is vastly more comprehensive in its treatment than the title would imply. It is rare that within so restricted an area as the "Upper Peninsula" of Michigan, the lore and local color tradition could vary so widely as they do.

Here are first-hand accounts, from Chippewa and Potawatomi Indians, of bearwalkers or ghosts, and of legendary powers of evil; from Canadians giving legendary accounts of "lutins," signs, beggars, black magic, and dialect; from

Cornish "Cousin Jacks," the salty characters of mines and forest; from Finns, who preserve the continental legend of Grimm's Fairy Tales in the telling of "tall tales," and in their amusing accounts of "blood stopping." There is the special lore of this cold, lake region of the north—a region known for its mines, its lumber industry, and the sagas of lakesmen in one of the busiest transportation centers of the world—but to all of this has been added a color through racial and language characteristics and a blending of European and local legend and tradition more varied than could elsewhere be found.

Dorson calls these "folk narratives, folk documents of a sort, filled with the raw stuff of life and filtered through imaginative minds...folk historians of the highest level...but seeing experience through heroic and fantastic outlines." Occasionally the author becomes so impressed with one of these strange and fantastic accounts that he burst out, "I submit that (this one) takes the prize."

--E. G. Rogers

Grant Foreman, Indian Removal, Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press (new edition), 1953. \$6.00.

Although Grant Foreman's Indian Removal was first published in 1932 as the second in "The Civilization of the American Indian Series," its reprint and revision, released March 18, 1953, is essentially the same. It remains one of the most authoritative and comprehensive studies that has been made, a basic treatment of the problems of the removal of the Five Civilized Tribes—the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, Cherokee, and Seminole. It dramatically unfolds a story of promise and broken faith, of treachery and recrimination, of political baseness and violent expulsion, elsewhere without a parallel in the history of nations. It was, indeed a kind of Lidice which prompted Marion L. Starkey to write her now well-known volume, The Cherokee Nation, a story of a "trail of tears."

Since there were no ready chroniclers at hand to set down the thrilling narrative of this tragic story, Mr. Foreman has pieced together the threads of this authentic account from thousands of fragments in which some principal in the story jotted down a personal reaction or revealed certain facts in an official or unofficial report. One is invariably impressed by the lack of understanding and blind indifference of the government, by the unlimited selfishness of the whites within the region, and by the hopeless pleading of Indian agents and the intolerable suffering of the emigrants as they turned their backs upon all that gave their life a meaning. The stories of John Ross of the Cherokees and Osceola of the Seminoles are in themselves highlights of the volume. The volume may leave the reader a little prouder of this inimitable demonstration of courage, and a little less proud of this part of our heritage which has been bought at the price of suffering.

--E. G. Rogers

NEW RECORDINGS issued by the Elektra-Stratford Record Corporation (189 West 10th Street, New York, N. Y.):

British Traditional Ballads in America, sung by Shep Ginandes; 10" LP. \$4.45.
Frank Warner Sings American Folk Songs and Ballads, 10" LP. \$4.45.
Turkish and Spanish folksongs, sung by Cynthia Gooding; 10" LP. \$4.45.
Voices of Haiti, recorded on location by Maya Deren; 10" LP. \$4.45.

With the issuing of these four albums, the Elektra-Stratford Record Corporation continues to build an excellent reputation for finding unusual talent and releasing records which are not only excellently recorded in the mechanical sense but which retain the very elements which make folk recordings enjoyable. This company does not use studio tricks such as the echo chamber, the artificial multi-tape, and the incongruous mixing of professional musicians with non-professional. It does not feel that every performer has to be dragged to the studio for "takes." Through the use of tape, excellent informal recordings are made on the spot where the performer feels at ease. This is a significant fact in evaluating these recordings.

In British Traditional Ballads in America, Shep Ginandes sings six of the Child Ballads found in this country:

- "The Golden Willow Tree" (Child 286)
- "The Cruel Mother" (Child 20)
- "Lord Bateman" (Child 53)
- "Edward" (Child 13)
- "Lord Randell" (Child 12)
- "Lord Thomas and Fair Elinor" (Child 73)

As in the case of the Jean Richie Album which this company released several months ago and about which this reviewer was most enthusiastic, this album can be listened to as pure entertainment as well as for its educational value. Shep Ginandes has an impeccable flow of clear diction which never sounds over-pronounced but which gives the listener every word of these important stories. His "Edward" is one of the best I have heard from anyone. The accompaniment used is the guitar, which is played with necessary tunings (banjo tuning in the "Willow Tree") and in a highly successful and appropriate style. "Lord Randell" is sung in the Welsh version.

The only criticism which can be made of the album is that not one sentence in the excellent special folder of words and the well written cover is given regarding the artist, Mr. Ginandes.

Frank Warner Sings American Folk Songs and Ballads is a product of a husband and wife team. Anne Warner writes excellent notes about the unusual folk songs presented by her husband. She, no doubt, was responsible for encouraging her husband to sing the songs which are part of his heritage and she also combined with him in searching out folk songs throughout the country. The recording is unusual for the fact that the singer imitates the styles of the singers from whom he collected the melodies. This is the first time in this reviewer's knowledge that the imitation technique has been used. With most singers it could be a ludicrous and distasteful practice. It could so easily poke fun at the humble original version. In the case of Mr. Warner this is not true; as a matter of fact he is at his best when he is imitating Frank Proffitt, of Pick Breeches Valley, North Carolina, in the singing of "Tom Dooley," or the old Civil War song, "Unreconstructed Rebel," as sung by a Confederate veteran. The songs are accompanied by a homemade banjo which has more of a guitar than banjo sound.

In Turkish and Spanish Folk Songs this reviewer feels the company has scooped the major record companies as they did in the case of Jean Richie.

Cynthia Gooding, born in Minnesota, and not as well known as her voice deserves, sings with such skill and warmth those songs which have been obscure to all of us so as to arouse a curiosity to investigate the field further. In the carefully written notes on the back cover and the translation folder one immediately sees why "Turkish and Spanish Songs" could be included in one album. The contrast of these songs is given by Hasan Ozbekkan on the back cover. Miss Gooding's voice is contralto of such natural beauty as to arrest the attention of any casual listener. I challenge any of the world renowned contraltos to touch the artistry and vocal beauty of "Tres Moricas" in this album.

"Voices of Haiti" is designed primarily for the student of unusual primitive societies. These actual unrehearsed excerpts are examples of the sound aspects of Vondoun worship with intricate three-drum rhythmic patterns predominating over wavering voices. The genuineness is at once obvious and for this reason the disc gives the finest sort of study material for this culture. Maya Deren, who recorded these examples of primitive worship, has written a scholarly back cover for the album and has prepared a useful folder for the listener.

--Charles F. Bryan

Leadbelly Sings More Play Party Songs. Stinson LP #41.
American Folksay, Ballads and Dances; Vol. 4. Stinson LP #11.

Stinson's latest album of some of Leadbelly's songs for children has great appeal to youngsters of all ages—even the gray-haired ones. Leadbelly's music has a simple, steady, vigorous style that calls to mind images of country life--the warm earth, sunshine, and children at the feet of a smiling man. The stories he sings are sometimes humorous, sometimes sad, but they are always about things children understand: birds, animals, boys and girls, or how a little child feels when his mama goes away on the railroad train. The words and melodies are simple and easily learned, but made even more easy by Leadbelly's plain and direct way with the songs. Children find themselves singing along with the records after one or two playings. The prize, perhaps, is "More Yet," a riddle-like song full of wonderful rhythm and repetition.

The "Folksay" album contains a wide variety of music. There are two ballads, "Down in the Willow Garden" and "Shenandoah"; a hoedown, "Cripple Creek"; a song from the American Revolution, "The Bennington Riflemen"; a work song, "Stewball"; a blues song, "T for Texas"; and a combination narrative and vocal account of a bear hunt in the southern mountains, "Cumberland Mountain Bear Chase." The album brings together such old hands as Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly, Cisco Houston, and Ernie Lieberman. To some this variety of song and artist will be appealing, opening up opportunities for contrast. To other listeners, this same variety may account for a certain lack of emotional appeal in the album. In one family, at any event, the "Bear Chase" proved very popular while the other performances struck no deeper response than do the many passing sounds of radio country-style music.

These albums, as well as other Stinson recordings of folk music, may be secured from Union Square Music, Inc., 27 Union Square West, New York 3, N. Y.

--Lucia Manley Hymes
James L. Hymes, Jr.

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